

The passage in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (530) has been so interpreted. It appears, however, that in that passage the author is comparing his comedy with that of others. He has admitted, he says, no low tricks appealing to vulgar tastes, no phallus which would make the boys laugh, no lascivious dance, no scurrilous stories, and no " knock-do\vn business." This is not a criticism of the phallus on grounds of obscenity, but on grounds of buffoonery. In the *Acharnians* (243 and 259) are matter-of-fact references to the phallus worn by the actor, as he might have referred to his mantle. Other cases occur which are not so outspoken. In the *Lysistrata* the mention of the phallus in connection with the motive of the play is of the last degree of vulgarity. We cannot find that any Greeks, Romans, or Byzantines protested against these exhibitions of the phallus, which to us are so obscene. The *mimttis* was the lowest and most popular kind of theatrical exhibition, and it was in it that the use of the phallus was most constant. Even Christian preachers who denounced the *mimus* as demoralizing, and who specified in detail what they found objectionable in it, never mention the display of obscene things. All people were accustomed to the phallus as the archaic symbol of the servants of Dionysus.¹ Christian preachers would have made no allowance for it on that account, — rather the contrary, — and they would not have refrained from objecting to it on account of the archaic, or artistic, or traditional element, if they had disapproved of it. It must be that everybody was indifferent to it.

The twin pillars which were common in front of Semitic temples and which stood before the temple at Jerusalem are

interpreted as phalli.²

476. Phallus as amulet. At Rome the phallus was an amulet and was worn by all children. The figure, therefore, cannot have been an obscene one. In the Roman gardens also were ithyphallic figures which appear to bear witness to a survival of the growth-demon idea, or to usages which originated in the growth-demon idea, and were perpetuated traditionally without knowledge of the original meaning. On mediaeval churches

¹ Reich, 503.
*Semites** 457.

² W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the*